

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE: AN INSPECTOR CALLS

TEACHER GUIDE & STUDENT WORKSHEETS



This booklet is a companion to the online curriculum available at
www.yourfavouriteteacher.com.

It includes the content from the
'An Inspector Calls' course.

An Inspector Calls

This pack covers context, plot outline, character and theme analysis, together with some exam style questions and answers.

This booklet contains:

- Suggested teaching order
- Learning objectives for each session
- Questions or activities that tutors could use in their sessions
- A worksheet for each session
- Exam style questions

Suggested Teaching Order and Learning Objectives

Lesson	Lesson Focus	Learning Objective
1	Plot Overview	To be able to understand how the play is structured and the moral questions central to the narrative To be able to understand the features of plays
2-3	Arthur and Sybil Birling	To be able to understand how the characters of Mr and Mrs Birling are constructed and the relationship between them and Eva Smith
4	Sheila Birling	To be able to understand how the character of Sheila is constructed and acts as a moral judge of the other characters
5-6	Eric Birling and Gerald Croft	To be able to understand the contextual factors affecting men and women in the context of the play To be able to understand how Eric and Gerald's actions had economic and social impact on the character of Eva
7	Eva Smith	To be able to understand and explain how the character of Eva represents inequality in early 20 th Century Britain
8	Inspector Goole	To be able to explain how structure affects the audience's understanding of the play To be able to understand how each character contributed to the death of Eva Smith
9	Themes and Ideas	To be able to understand the power dynamics of gender in early 20 th Century Britain To be able to understand how other contextual factors affect the audience's understanding of the play
10	Socialism and Responsibility	To be able to understand how the topics of Socialism and Collective Responsibility are represented in the play
11	Context of An Inspector Calls	To be able to explain how the values of the Edwardian era shape characters and events in the play and its moral message
12	JB Priestley: the man and the message	To be able to understand how the author and his context are linked to the play and its moral message

Suggested Questions for Discussion and/or Activities

Lesson	Lesson Focus	Questions
1	Plot Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the first act and scene position the audience to like or dislike the Birling family? What do we learn about the characters as we meet them? How does the play's structure engage the audience?
2-3	Arthur and Sybil Birling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the author create such a negative impression of Arthur, even before we know of his role in Eva Smith's death? Why does the author choose to give Sybil Birling a role in a charity? How does this contrast with her treatment of Eva Smith? How does Sybil's treatment of her children create problems for Eva Smith?
4	Sheila Birling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does Sheila do to contribute to Eva's death? How is Sheila's behaviour different to that of her family? How does Sheila respond to her brother and to Gerald?
5-6	Eric Birling and Gerald Croft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do Eric and Gerald react to the Inspector? Does either character take responsibility for their role in Eva's death? Explain. Do what extent does either character change?
7	Eva Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was Eva Smith wise or unwise to stand up to Mr Birling? Explain. Could Eva Smith have escaped her fate? How does the author create sympathy for Eva Smith?
8	Inspector Goole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Mr Birling react to the Inspector's presence? Why? How does the author make Inspector Goole seem threatening, mysterious or oppressive?
9	Themes and Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's the role of social class in the events of An Inspector Calls? What moral argument do you think the author is making and why? To what extent do you agree with this argument?
10	Socialism and Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would the story of Eva Smith have been different in a socialist system? Who should have been responsible for Eva Smith when she was in Mr Birling's factory? When she lost her job at the department store? When she was pregnant and penniless? Why?
11	Context of An Inspector Calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the author distinguish between the younger and older people in the play, and their reaction to the story of Eva Smith? Does the play leave us hopeful for a better future, or hopeless?
12	JB Priestley: the man and the message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did Priestley's own life experiences shape the play? Priestley set the play in 1912 but published it in 1946. Why do you think this is? How had social values changed during this period?
13	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the examiner looking for? How to I distinguish myself from other students? What have I learned from my last assessment, to do better this time? What sorts of mistakes are common, and how can I avoid them?

WORKSHEETS

Lesson 1 Plot Overview & Context

Bullet point the main things that happen in each act.

Act	Summary
1	
2	

Context:

The play is set just two years shy of the First World War and Priestley decides to set it here, rather than in the midst of the war, to give audiences the advantage over the family as to what is about to come and all of the post-war changes made.

- After the war there was a great deal of questioning being done regarding how much power and leadership the upper class held which didn't happen before the war.
- Developments in gender equality were made; by 1928 all men and women over 21 were allowed to vote, which spread the power out more evenly.
- The labour vs capitalist tensions came to a head in 1926 when workers striked nationally (The General Strike) which forced many major industries to stop temporarily.
- The Depression from 1930 saw a massive increase in unemployment and terrible poverty for workers.
- After both world wars there was a need for a fairer society which many more now worked for with socialist and left-wing ideas becoming more and more popular.
- The Labour Party came into power in 1945 and the welfare system was greatly improved (The NHS was started in 1948).

The Titanic-era

The play was written during the Titanic era and Mr Birling makes reference to the Titanic in the famous quote '*unsinkable...absolutely unsinkable*'

- The Titanic was one of three 'Olympic Class' ships belonging to the White Star Line.
- These ships were significantly advanced for their time with progressive engineering, size, and speed.
- The ship was completed in only three years and was ready to sail from Southampton to New York with a variety of people seeking a better life in America.
- It's trip ended 4th April 1912 and tragically took over 1500 lives with it.
- The Titanic represented the luxury of the Edwardian era and foreshadowed the tragedy of World War One.
- The Titanic was viewed as indestructible and was seen as a symbol of strength, wealth and prosperity. It saw the loss of both rich and poor however the rich were more likely to survive due to the location of the life rafts.

Titanic Worksheet

Source A

HMS Titanic: A survivor's story

Rosie Williams, aged 32, was accompanying Elizabeth Wilson who was travelling with her family. They sat in first class and began to feel a shake travel along the ship. Although their confidence in the ship's impeccable safety initially calmed nerves, the trembling of the ship soon overtook this belief.

"All of a sudden, I felt a tremble run along the ship. I was shocked by the whole motion and fell to the floor. With my trust in the mighty ship I calmed myself until there was a knock at my door and an instruction to come see the iceberg we had just hit from a neighbour's window."

With no atmosphere of panic or fear everyone was going back to their leisure activities. Elizabeth was nervous which unsettled me in turn. I kept asking passing staff if there was a threatening danger to which I was always politely told 'no.' Only when I heard the same staff panicked and desperate did I realise the reality of the situation and the fear of being involved in an accident at sea became real to me. Immediately we got dressed, received our life-jackets and travelled up the boat.

On the deck above, it was clear everyone was aware of the progressing danger. The scenes of men putting their wives and children in a life boat and promising to join to them later was unbearable and so I insisted Elizabeth moved beyond here. Brave men saw that Elizabeth and I were safely put into life boats, tens of feet over the ocean that would soon take their lives.

Our life boat, full of people soon lowered to the sea despite the confusion, desperation and fear. With the life boat slightly broken and tattered from the sheer impact of the collision, we sat as still as we could to reach the black, cold water. Even once we touched the water, I was unsure if my body would ever make it out of it, but after five long cold days of sailing on the great water, we reached home.

Source B

The Real Story of the RMS Titanic , Taken from www.teenlink.com

SOS! SOS! On April 15, 1912, RMS Titanic frantically summons help as the ship sinks farther and farther in the frigid water. Sadly, all the other nearby ships have their radios off at night and no-one answers the Titanic's call for help. Shortly before midnight, the Titanic struck an iceberg and sank. The wreck changed 706 people's lives and ended the lives of 1,517 more.

Claimed 'Unsinkable', the Titanic did not live up to its name. However, what made this accident such a big deal was the huge error the White Star Line made. The ship had a lifeboat capacity of 1,178 people, yet carried 3,547 passengers. When the ship started to sink, people panicked and left with the lifeboats only half-full. Many people jumped off the boat, only to catch hypothermia and die. Surviving passengers still remember the ghostly wails of dying passengers.

To truly understand the awful fate of the Titanic you have to go back to the very beginning. The Titanic was christened the 'Unsinkable' ship, but soon proved its nickname to be wrong. The actual voyage of the Titanic got off on the wrong foot. As the Titanic was pulling away from the port for the first time, the suction from its enormous size caused the ropes of a nearby boat to snap. The small boat almost crashed into the Titanic. Some passengers took this to be a bad omen and coincidentally or not, it was.

There are a number of odd rumours and legends about the Titanic but most are false. Among the more popular ones are that the bottle of champagne used to christen the Titanic didn't break on the first swing. This is untrue however, as the White Star Line did not believe in the custom. Other rumours include the fact that the Titanic had the cursed Hope diamond aboard the ship and that's why it sank, but this is also false. Another is that one of the ship's builders was accidentally sealed in the hull – also false. Silly rumours or not, they seemed to have predicted the Titanic's future better than we did.

At 11:40 pm on April 14, 1912, the two lookouts on duty, Fredrick Fleet and Reginald Lee spotted a large mass of ice and immediately rang the warning bell three times. "DING! DING! DING!" was all that the captain heard as he hurriedly gave the order "hard-a-starboard", meaning an abrupt turn toward the left. The iceberg managed to brush the right-side of the ship crushing the hull.

The Titanic's safe design included water-tight compartments that would allow the ship to stay floating in case of a minor incident. However, the ship could only stay

floating as long as less than 5 compartments were filled; 5 compartments were filling fast. Several ships hear the Titanic's calls for help but are too far away to be of any assistance. The ship's crew members were given the awful job of trying to persuade reluctant passengers that the boat was really sinking. Many passengers only heard a dull scraping noise as the ice went past the ship's side and went back to sleep.

Answer the following questions:

1. Choose FOUR statements which are TRUE

- Rosie was unconcerned by the trembling at first.
- The trembling wasn't noticed by the other passengers.
- Rosie could tell that Elizabeth was nervous after the shaking of the ship.
- The staff lied to Rosie and told her that all was fine.
- The women put on their own life-jackets.
- The stewardess put on their life-jackets.
- Elizabeth and Rosie went below a deck to seek help.

2. Write a summary of the differences from Source A and Source B

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3. What does the author of Source A do to display fear to the reader?

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Eva's Suicide

Due to the nature of Eva's death, we will never truly know what drove her to commit suicide but we assume it was a case of the final action, being the straw that broke the camel's back (the last of many things that drove her to suicide).

Ultimately it was a combination of factors that were contributed by each member of the Birling family:

- Mr Birling fired her
- Sheila got her fired from her next job
- Gerald used Eva as a mistress
- Mrs Birling refused to help her
- Eric got her pregnant

The inspector tries to make each member see the consequences of their actions by using harsh emotive language ("burnt her inside out") which contrasts with the upbeat and picturesque atmosphere he enters into.

J.B. Priestley uses Eva's death to symbolise that we all need to look after one another regardless of race, gender, class, etc. before we encounter a similar situation in our own lives.

Features of a Play

Setting

The entire play takes place in the Birling's dining room meaning that there is only one set for the play (although this is not a strict instruction set by Priestley). The first set used for the 1946 production illustrates the claustrophobic set Priestley designed to raise tension between the characters. Additionally, the set emphasises the private and self-centred lifestyle the Birling family have.

The Stage

The stage can reveal a lot about the characters and the play that we don't get from the text itself.

- The single set suggests the characters are close-minded, which we later have confirmed.
- The lighting becomes "brighter and harder" when Inspector Goole appears as he highlights each members' responsibility for Eva's death.
- Stephen Daldry's production (1992) had the house on stilts above a street showing how their status separates them from everyone else. It also symbolises the unsteady family which falls easily.

Task

Include Priestley's instructions for the following in the stage directions and explain the effect it creates:

1. Sound

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2. Special Effects

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3. Actors

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4. Lighting

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5. Set

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Play Terminology

Terminology	Definition	Example
A Play	<i>A play is different from a novel. Priestley intended for it to be seen and heard on stage.</i>	
Acts		
Stage Directions		
Props	<i>This is a significant object seen on stage that adds to the plot.</i> <i>It could be a clue, or it could create more mystery.</i>	
Dramatic Irony		
Entrances and Exits	<i>How characters enter and exit the stage can change the plot. Consider how the other characters react to it, accompanying sound, and dialogue that goes on simultaneously.</i>	
Warning Signs	<i>This can include props, dialogue, or stage directions that are present from the beginning that point the audience to upcoming problems.</i>	
Beginning and Ends of Each Act	<i>The end of acts can be used to create tension (e.g. through the use of a cliff-hanger).</i>	

Audience		
Dialogue		

Lesson 2 -3 Worksheets: Arthur & Sybil Birling

Arthur

Arthur Birling is presented as a wealthy businessman who has and continues to climb the social ladder as we know from his "provincial speech". His fierce capitalist nature is what opposed him with Eva and why he ends up firing her, and because of this, he is presented as a villain in the audience's eyes.

Furthermore, he seems to care more about business and finances than he does his own family. We see this when his daughter gets engaged and he appears to be celebrating the idea of "the time when Crofts and Birlings are no longer competing but are working together – for lower costs and higher prices" rather than the idea of his daughter being happily married. Mr Birling is unsettled by the arrival of Inspector Goole and does not like being inferior to anyone else.

Dramatic Irony: When the audience knows something that the characters don't.

Foreshadowing: A warning or hint of something that will happen in the future.

Inspector Goole's omniscience is emphasised in these writer's techniques. For example, the Inspector's omniscience is highlighted when he foreshadows the arrival of the genuine police inspector: "I haven't much time". Priestley also uses dramatic irony to shape the audience's understanding of different characters – namely Arthur Birling. The first example we see of this is when the audience has the advantage of time and are able to know that Birling is wrong (and therefore an untrustworthy character) when he makes claims such as the Titanic being "unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable" or that "the Germans don't want war".

Mr Birling is presented as not knowing as much as he'd like people to think which is reinforced when he reveals that he is on his way to a knighthood giving that there is no "scandal" in the way before the Inspector arrives and releases the biggest scandal the Birling's have ever been involved in.

Sybil

Her main role in Eva's death comes to light in Act Two. After Sheila heard Gerald's confession to being involved in Eva he left to go for a walk. In this moment the Inspector showed Mrs Birling the photo of Eva. Mrs Birling grudgingly confesses that she saw a pregnant Eva two weeks ago when she came to the Brumley Women's Charity Organisation to ask for financial assistance.

As the chairwoman, Mrs Birling made it clear to the committee that Eva's appeal should be rejected because she was calling herself Mrs Birling and because she saw no reason why the responsibility of the unborn baby should be anybody else's but the fathers. Eva told her that the father was providing her with money but she was rejecting it because she believed it to be stolen, but Mrs Birling would not budge. When discussing it with the Inspector, Mrs Birling still claimed that she was only doing her duty and takes no responsibility in Eva's death.

Explain what the following quotations tell us about Arthur Birling

"Rubbish! If you don't come down sharply on some of these people, they'd soon be asking for the earth."	
"But the way some of these cranks talk and write now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else, as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive....".	
"I might find my way into the next honours list. Just a knighthood of course."	
"Look here, Inspector, I consider this uncalled-for and officious. I've half a mind to report you....."	
"Of course. Somebody put that fellow up to coming here and hoaxing us. There are people in this town who dislike me enough to do that."	
"Well I only did what any employer might have done."	

Explain what the following quotations tell us about Sybil Birling

"I realise that you have to conduct some sort of inquiry, but I must say that so far you seem to be conducting it in a rather peculiar and offensive manner."	
"If you think you can bring any pressure to bear upon me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken. Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation."	
"She was giving herself ridiculous airs. She was claiming elaborate fine feelings and scruples that were simply absurd in a girl in her position."	
"He ought to be dealt with very severely"	
"It wasn't I who had her turned out of her employment – which probably began it all."	
"But I accept no blame for it at all."	
"In spite of what's happened to the girl since, I consider I did my duty."	

<p>"In the circumstances I think I was justified."</p>	
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Lesson 4

Sheila

When the Inspector reveals that he wants to question Sheila on the death of Eva Smith in Act Two. He then tells Sheila that Eva was moving jobs to a large shop named Milwards but wasn't able to work there as she was sacked as the result of a customer complaint. After Sheila is shown a photo of Eva she recognises her and admits that it was her doing that got Eva sacked.

Sheila had gone into the shop that Eva was working at, in a dress that did not suit her, she saw Eva smirking with a colleague and she reacted in anger telling the manager that if Eva wasn't fired Mrs Birling would close their account.

Sheila looks back at this with guilt and a huge amount of responsibility for Eva's suicide. The inspector goes on to reveal that Eva changed her name to Daisy Renton and Gerald's reaction shows that he too knew her. At the end of the act, the audience is waiting to hear Gerald's involvement in the story and in Eva's death.

Sheila: *"I can't help thinking about this girl – destroying herself so horribly – and I've been so happy tonight."*

Inspector: *"There are a lot of young women living that sort of existence, Miss Birling, in every city and big town in this country."*

Sheila: *"But these girls aren't cheap labour. They're people."*

Explanation

Here Sheila comes to the realisation that having Eva fired, as well as the socio-economic situation of many young women at the time, was a contribution to the death of Eva Smith. Sheila becomes aware of her responsibility, and feels guilty for what happened.

Inspector: *"Miss Birling has just been made to understand what she did to this girl. She feels responsible. And if she leaves us now, and doesn't hear anymore, then she'll feel she's entirely to blame, she'll be alone with her responsibility."*

Explanation

The Inspector has been made aware of Sheila's feelings, perhaps planting the seed of doubt regarding her innocence in the eyes of her family. Goole is insinuating that if Sheila doesn't hear about everyone else's portion of the responsibility for Eva's death she might think she was the only one to contribute to her suicide.

Sheila: *"I don't dislike you as I did half an hour ago, Gerald. In fact, in some odd way, I rather respect you more than I've ever done before."*

Explanation

Upon finding out Gerald had an affair with Eva/Daisy, Sheila could have lost all respect for Gerald due to his adulterous behaviour, however, she understands that his intentions with the girl were good to begin with, but does not feel as though their relationship should continue.

Sheila: *"We've no excuse now for putting on airs."*

Explanation

Sheila is the only character who comprehends that "putting on airs" or being false in the presence of the Inspector will not prevent his questioning. This is also a plea for honesty as she supposes her mother would want to keep up the family's good reputation with the intent of lying to the Inspector, which Sheila finds unwise.

"Sheila: "If all that's come out tonight is true, then it doesn't matter much who it was who made us confess."

Explanation

Sheila understands the guilt lays on all their shoulders, attempting to portray that fact to her family. She disregards the idea that the confession was forced out of them by Goole and accepts partial responsibility for the death of Eva.

Answer the following questions

1. What is Sheila's reaction to realising that she knew Eva?

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2. Compare the reactions of Sheila and Arthur when they learn that they knew Eva?

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3. For what reason was Eva fired? What does this reveal about Sheila's character?

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4. Discuss the language that the Inspector uses when talking to Sheila. Consider how it is different from the language Inspector Goole uses with the other characters.

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5. Considering the change in Sheila's character from the start to the end of Act One – discuss the younger generation in An Inspector Calls.

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Explain what the following quotations tell us about Sheila Birling

"I can't help thinking about this girl – destroying herself so horribly – and I've been so happy tonight."	
"I went to the manager at Milwards and I told him that if they didn't get rid of that girl, I'd never go near the place again."	
"You mustn't try to build up a kind of wall between us and that girl. If you do, then the inspector will just break it down. And it'll be all the worse when he does."	
"I know I'm to blame – and I'm desperately sorry"	
"There was something curious about him. He never seemed like an ordinary police inspector..."	
"The point is you don't seem to have learnt anything."	
"But, Mother, do stop before it's too late."	

"Because I was in a furious temper."	
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Lesson 5 – 6

Eric

At the end of the second act, Mrs Birling blames the father of Eva's unborn child and demands that he is made an example of. It is at this moment that both Sheila and the audience realise that Eric is the father. The act ends when Eric enters the room. In Act Three, a tense and negative meeting between Eric and his parents is interrupted by Inspector Goole demand to question Eric which is when Eric confirms what the audience suspects about his relationship with Eva.

Eric furthermore reveals that he met her in the same bar as Gerald, he admits that he was drunk and escorted her back to her lodgings. Eric tells the Inspector that back at her lodgings he became violent when she wouldn't let him in and they eventually slept together. Two weeks later they did so again and soon afterward Eva realised that she was pregnant. She knew she didn't love Eric and so did not want to marry him but she did accept Eric's money until she learned that it was stolen. Eric then admits that he stole £50 from Mr Birling's office which is what made Mr and Mrs Birling most angry.

Explain what the following quotations tell us about Eric

1. "She told me she didn't want to go in but that – well, I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty – and I threatened to make a row."

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2. "I wasn't in love with her or anything – but I liked her – she way pretty and a good sport."

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3. "In a way she treated me – as if I were a kid. Though I was nearly as old as she was."

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4. "You're beginning to pretend that nothings really happened at all. And I can't see it like that."

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5. "The money's not the important thing. It's what happened to the girl and what we did to her that matters."

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6. "I did what I did. And mother did what she did. And the rest of you did what you did to her."

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7. "What does it matter now whether they give you a knighthood or not?"

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Gerald

In Act Two, after a tense conversation between Sheila and Gerald, Mrs Birling then attempts to make the Inspector leave, as Eric's heavy drinking comes to light. Gerald reveals that he had known Eva in the form of Daisy Renton. Gerald and Daisy met at the local Variety Theatre (said to be haunted by prostitutes). Gerald saved Daisy from the unwelcome attention from alderman Meggarty. Gerald continued to help Daisy by letting her stay in his friends flat where she became his mistress when he learned that she was penniless. When he had to go away he called the affair off and gave her some money to see her through the next few months.

Explain what the following quotations tell us about Gerald

1. "It was all over and done with, last summer. I hadn't set eyes on the girl for at least six months. I don't come into this suicide business."

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2. "I didn't feel about her as she felt about me."

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3. "The girl... gave me a glance that was nothing less than a cry for help."

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4. "I insisted on Daisy moving into those rooms and I made her take some money to keep her going there."

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5. "I'm rather more – upset – by this than I appear to be."

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6. "For God's sake – don't say anything to the inspector."

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7. "All right, I knew her. Let's leave it at that."

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Answer the following questions

1. What does Eric say halfway down page 50 that shows his anger towards Mrs Birling?

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2. What do the Birling's learn about Eric?

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3. What does Eric suggest that he has done to Eva?

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4. With close mention to Eric's attitude towards Eva, discuss the relationship between wealthy young men and working-class women.

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5. What is revealed about Eric and Mr Birling's relationship on page 54?

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6. Explain what Priestley's use of punctuation on page 55 tells us of Eric's distress.

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7. How does the relationship between Mrs Birling and Eric change over the last Act?

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8. In the second act and what does Priestley do to contrast Eva's behaviour with that of Arthur Birling and Gerald Croft's?

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9. Discuss the change in Sheila and Gerald's relationship in Act Two.

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10. Consider Mr and Mrs Birling's reaction to learning that Gerald has been involved with another woman.

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11. Discuss why you think Sheila wants her relationship to work with Gerald.

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Lesson 7

Eva Smith

Eva is a forward-thinking working-class woman. Her life is ended short and tragically which means that the audience never meets her but we can learn a lot about her character from what is said about her by the other characters. We know that she is passionate about fighting for equality as she leads a group of workers in a strike for better and fairer pay. She is also known as Daisy Renton as the Inspector reveals that this is what she changed her name to when she became a prostitute. It is never confirmed if they really are the same person or if they're real at all.

The Inspector comes to seek the justice that Eva never had as she was trapped in her powerless situation. Furthermore, the inspector uses Eva to teach the Birling family about social responsibility and to show them the error of their ways.

The mystery in the play surrounds Eva and the fact that the characters all know her as a different name signifies this. Do we really know that all these girls are 'Eva Smith'? No. And we will never have that confirmed because Eva isn't here to answer the questions of the other characters or of the audience. In being all of these other girls, one thing is definite and that is the development of 'Eva' as a character to symbolise the hardships of leading life as a working-class woman.

Getting to know Eva Smith

The following questions are here to help you develop your understanding of Eva Smith.

Each one will stretch your concept of the character and question a different aspect of Eva's purpose in the play.

1. Who is Eva Smith?

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2. Who is responsible for her death? Who are they exactly?

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3. What are Inspector Goole's feelings towards Eva? Discuss how the Inspector's different roles in the play affect his feelings towards Eva.

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4. Is Eva's sole purpose to display Priestley's opinions about society's attitude towards the working-class?

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Key Quotes

Sheila: *"I can't help thinking about this girl – destroying herself so horribly – and I've been so happy tonight."*

Explanation

Sheila begins to show her sensitive and emotional side, which contrasts with the way she previously acted when she first met Eva Smith. It is apparent that Sheila is not as cold as she appears, and when confronted with the truth, she is willing to change her ways and accept responsibility for her actions. Unlike her parents, she is more open to change and considering different opinions, which conveys an obvious generational difference. The quote signifies the pain Eva would have gone through, as a result of her dire circumstances.

Arthur: *"Wretched girl's suicide"*

Explanation

Unlike Sheila, Arthur is less sympathetic to Eva Smith's suffering. The quote shows that despite the struggle that some people go through, there are others who will refuse to fully recognize their struggles. Being unable to empathize with those that do not share any common ground, such as class or financial status, appears to be a re-occurring theme in the play.

Inspector Goole: *"This girl killed herself – and died a horrible death. But each of you helped to kill her. Remember that. Never forget it. But then I don't think you ever will."*

Explanation

The inspector attempts to make the Birling family aware of their actions. He uses very direct language when he says "you helped to kill her". His tone is hard hitting as he wants to ensure the Birling family understand the weight of their words. His care for Eva Smith is apparent and it signifies the tragedy of her loss.

Inspector Goole: "There are millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and do. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other."

Explanation

The inspector tries to explain the importance of being aware and considerate of those around you, as they are a part of your life, whether you like it or not. Eva Smith is essentially one of many who go through life, alone in their struggles, it shows how we all experience pain and difficulty at some point in our lives, and he is using Eva Smith as a representative of the injustice towards people of a lower class.

"Sybil: "As if a girl of that sort would ever refuse money"

Explanation

Mrs. Birling shows her arrogant and proud nature when she refers to Eva Smith as someone who would take every opportunity to take advantage of wealthy people because she does not have the money or class. As we know, Eva Smith was not the type to use and abuse people. However, Mrs Birling shows her ignorant and snobbish nature when she assumes people of a lower-class act indecently.

"Gerald: "She was young and pretty and intensely grateful"

Explanation

This quote from Gerald conveys Eva's likable nature, the fact that she was so kind to Gerald, makes him feel even more remorse for her death. The way she is conveyed would also garner more sympathy from the audience, as there was nothing malicious about her character.

Eric: "We did her in all right."

Explanation

This quote from Eric suggests the Birling family's responsibility for her death. It also conveys his Eric's ability to accept his mistakes and learn from them. He openly admits to playing a possible role in her death and his tone is direct and honest.

Symbolism

Eva Smith is the perfect symbol in 'An Inspector Calls', as she is never seen or heard, she acts as a representative of women, the working-class, and the labour side of the Labour vs. Capital tensions.

As a working-class woman in 1912, Eva was living a fairly straightforward life as she was always destined for hardships and struggles. This can be seen as the Inspector reminds Sheila that "there are a lot of young women living that sort of existence", demonstrating that Eva Smith isn't a rare or special case in any way – she represents one, of so many people who struggled and were put down for fighting for better circumstances.

Inequality

Throughout the play, we are shown the difference between men and women. Sheila and Mrs Birling display the life of women who are in a privileged position but this is quite different to the life of Eva and all working-class women.

Eva shows the struggle of going from job to job, being underpaid and taken advantage of. We see how replaceable she is for employers as there are countless other women in the same position as Eva. This is completely different from the life of Sheila and Sybil who wouldn't even dream of working.

Eva then has to turn to a life of prostitution where she continues to be taken advantage of by wealthy men. We see her being hidden and shamed by Gerald and raped by Eric which puts her in an even worse position when she falls pregnant.

Her pregnancy leads her to even more shame (particularly by Mrs Birling) and to further financial troubles. The life that Eva leads shows a range of problems that although aren't specific to her, are troubles that working-class women faced in 1912 that separated them from upper-class women and took away some of their femininity.

Answer the following questions

1. Provide four adjectives to describe Eva, and a quote to explain each choice.

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2. How does the audience feel about Eva?

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3. How does Priestley present Eva as powerless?

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4. What does Eva symbolise?

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Lesson 8

Inspector Goole

Inspector Goole is an alleged police officer questioning the Birling family's involvement in Eva Smith's life and death. At the end of the play we learn that Goole is not a police inspector – and some even question if he is a person, or even real. We are given clues about this throughout the play as he takes moral and political stances and demonstrates them quite clearly as the voice of J.B. Priestley's views. Inspector Goole is an omniscient character and his moral judgment stops Eric and Sheila in their tracks and makes them think about their choices and their responsibility for Eva's death. Although his legal power isn't genuine, his effect is still powerful for the two.

Inspector Goole creates an unsettling presence – this is for many reasons: his authority, how he separates the Birling family members, and his classless status. In 1912, class was paramount but he seems to be outside of this system which again gives him power over the Birling family who focus on the system and are very much trapped within it. In Act Three, after establishing that all of the Birling's have played a part in Eva's suicide (whether they themselves recognise it or not) the Inspector delivers a strong message about our responsibility for each other and leaves afterwards.

Explain what the following quotations tell us about the Inspector

1. "It would do us all a bit of good if sometimes we tried to put ourselves in the place of these young women counting their pennies in their dingy little back bedrooms."

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2. "That's more or less what I was thinking earlier tonight, when I was in the Infirmary looking at what was left of Eva Smith. A nice little promising life there, I thought, and a nasty mess somebody's made of it."

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3. "You used the power you had... to punish the girl."

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4. "Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges."

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5. "We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other."

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6. "If men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish."

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7. "This young woman, Eva Smith, was a bit out of the ordinary."

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Questioning

Inspector Goole's questioning is systematic and his source of power. His refusal to change his technique or inform the Birling's, in particular, Arthur, who is uneasy and therefore inferior. This is reinforced by the way the Inspector shows the photo to one character at a time leaving Gerald to question if they even all saw the same photograph.

The Birling family runs on secrecy, polite behaviour and a desire for mutual benefit. The Inspector is able to break each character slightly until the whole family has broken down.

By revealing each member's secrets, the family turns on each other and their polite behaviour disappears as their guilt leads them to seek to save themselves and not the family.

Inspector: "It's the way I like to go to work. One person and one line of inquiry at a time. Otherwise, there's a muddle."

Explanation

Here the Inspector tells us he prefers to question one person at a time, which shows him to be a systematic, calculating man. His imposing presence makes it impossible for characters to create a false narrative, whilst their isolation makes it hard to gang up on him and defend each other.

***Gerald: "We're respectable citizens and not dangerous criminals."
Inspector: "Sometimes there isn't as much difference as you think."***

Explanation

The Inspector insinuates the Birlings are responsible for the death of a young girl (Eva Smith), therefore categorising them as criminals.

Inspector: "If there's nothing else, we'll have to share our guilt."

Explanation

"...our guilt" specifically paints the image that Goole may be their conscience and not an actual human. Priestley does this on purpose.

Inspector: "There'll be plenty of time, when I've gone, for you all to adjust your family relationships."

Explanation

The Inspector voices what everyone is thinking- their relationships are now heavily strained due to the dirty secrets that were exposed in the questioning process.

Inspector: "We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other."

Explanation

The Inspector places the blame on the whole family's shoulders for the death of Eva Smith, telling them they are all equally responsible for her, and in turn her suicide.

Eric: "Whoever that chap was, the fact remains that I did what I did. And mother did what she did. And the rest of you did what you did to her. It's still the same rotten story whether it's been told to a police inspector or to somebody else."

Explanation

Eric shows a level of maturity, realising all of their actions had an impact on Eva, and therefore their actions deem them responsible for her death.

Answer the following questions

1. What does the stage directions that introduce the Inspector ("The inspector need not be a big man...") suggest about the character?

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2. Summarise briefly what Priestley believes about society.

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3. What is the audience's opinion of Inspector Goole?

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4. What are the connotations of the name 'Inspector Goole'?

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5. Is the audience's opinion of the Inspector altered by the fact that he isn't a real police inspector?

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6. The play opens on a false image of a happy and united family. How would you describe the image of the Birling family at the end of the play?

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7. Discuss the idea that Inspector Goole is omniscient.

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8. How had Sheila and Eric changed after the Inspector's visit? Compare and contrast this with the change in Arthur and Sybil.

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9. Inspector Goole is extremely mysterious – many believe that he is not a human. If this is true, what is he?

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Lesson 9 - Themes

Power

All of the Birling's (including Gerald Croft) hold a lot of power due to their wealth and social status. However, it appears that they do not use this power in a fair or just way. In fact, the Inspector allows the audience to see that they use their power to abuse and misuse a vulnerable working-class girl.

As the play develops, the power of the Birling's becomes a point of conflict amongst them as Eric and Sheila become ashamed of their power and how it has been used inappropriately. Opposingly, Arthur, Sybil, and Gerald see no issue with their level of power and even celebrate the idea that the Inspector's visit was a hoax as it means that their social status will remain untouched.

Conflict

From the moment the Inspector enters, the question running through the play is 'who did it?'. Although at the beginning of the play, the Birling family try to keep the answer 'no one here' the Inspector's ongoing questioning and the rising tension forces the family to point the finger which causes some conflict.

Mrs Birling doesn't hold back in telling the Inspector as she told Eva herself that the person to blame for putting her in the disadvantaged situation that she was in is, is no one's responsibility but the father of her baby ("if the girl's death is due to anybody, then it's due to him"), after previously blaming her own husband too ("please remember before you start accusing me of anything that it wasn't I who had her turned out of employment – which probably began it all") and anyone else who she can blame, ("Unlike the other three, I did nothing that I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation"). This act of blaming to save oneself is a starting point for conflict within the family but isn't the only time we see it.

The family turn to conflict at the end of the play when the elder members (including Gerald) dismiss it as a hoax and celebrate their untouched status and wealth, whereas Sheila and Eric are ashamed of their actions and angered by the fact that the others are not. Eric reminds his family "the fact remains that I did what I did. And mother did what she did. And the rest of you did what you did to her" and Sheila is angered by her family's dismissal of the Inspector's message: "(with sudden alarm) Mother-stop-stop! Between us we drove that girl to commit suicide." This anger that Eric and Sheila feel towards their family continues the conflict after the Inspector leaves.

Tension Worksheet

Consider the opinion that the Inspector's questioning of Eric reveals as much about the tensions in the Birling family as it does about Eric's involvement with Eva Smith. Analyse the following quotes - making sure to find out the definitions of any words that you don't understand.

1. "The girl discovered that this money you were giving her was stolen, didn't she? Eric: (miserably) Yes. That was the worst of all. She wouldn't take any more and didn't want to see me again."

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2. "...She wasn't the unusual sort. But - well, I suppose she didn't know what to do."

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3. "Well, I was in that state when a chap easily turns nasty - and I threatened to make a row.'

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4. "And that's when it happened. And I didn't even remember - that's the hellish thing. Oh my God! - how stupid it all is!"

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5. "I wasn't in love with her or anything but I liked her - she was pretty and a good sport."

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6. "...she didn't want me to marry her. Said I didn't love her - and all that. In a way, she treated me - as if I were a kid. Though I was nearly as old as she was."

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7. Select 8 phrases or choices of language that create tension.

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Select 5 structural features which effectively entice the audience.

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8. How does Priestley create tension? What atmosphere is created and how does the audience feel as a result of this?

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9. "Why, you hysterical young fool - get back - or I'll..."

Explain why Mr Birling would threaten Eric.

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10. Discuss how the audience would react to Mr Birling's ironic use of the word 'hysterical'.

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11. Select three additional quotes which display this attitude that Mr Birling has towards Eric.

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12. "One Eva Smith has gone - but there are millions and millions of Eva Smith and John Smith still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, and what we think and say and do"

Create mind maps on the following techniques seen in this quote.

Think about the effect this has on the audience and on the other characters:
Include the following: Sentence Structure (Repetition) | Figurative Language | Metaphorical Language | Tone

Generation Gap

A key aspect of *An Inspector Calls* is age. This theme is where Priestley can demonstrate his belief in the upcoming generations and their ability to change the future. Priestley displays his opinions on the older generation through Mr Birling – a man who refuses to take responsibility for his actions – and Mrs Birling – a mother oblivious to the truth about her life and the lives of her children. This juxtaposes how he presents the younger generation – impressionable and willing to accept their mistakes. With age and generation separating the Birling family (and Gerald lying somewhere in the middle until the end of the play where he sides with the Birling parents. Complete the following table to understand and demonstrate the generational difference as shown by Priestley.

The Older Generation

- Old-fashioned – holding traditional views.
- Think that they know best.
- Believe that children should be seen and not heard.
- Try to control the younger generation.
- Don't change as a result of the Inspector's visit.
- They represent the ruling class.
- Stubborn and have a fixed mind-set

The Younger Generation

- Ambitious, determined, courageous and motivated.
- Willing to challenge authority.
- Use colloquial language.
- Refuse to be controlled by their parents at the end of the play.
- Accept responsibility for their actions.

"The famous generation who know it all."

1. Who said this?
2. What tone of voice is used?
3. What effect does this have?
4. What does Priestley want the audience to understand from this?

Use quotes from the play to fill up the opposing opinions within the play, and whether Priestley agrees.

Younger Generation	Technique / Key Word	Older Generation	Technique / Key Word	Priestley's Opinion
<i>Sheila: But these girls are not cheap labour, they're people!</i>		<i>Mr Birling: Nonsense! You'll have a good laugh over it yet.</i>		
<i>Sheila: (tensely) I want to get out of this. It frightens me the way you talk.</i>		<i>Mr Birling: (triumphantly) There you are! The whole story's just a lot of moonshine.</i>		
<i>Sheila: (passionately) You're pretending everything's just as it was before.</i>		<i>Mr Birling: All mixed up together like bees in a hive.</i>		

Gender Expectations

In 1912 when the play was set men and women had very specific and quite different roles in the family and in society. Priestley – having seen the change from 1912 to 1946 – wants to show that there is still room to change and does this by highlighting the problematic gender expectations set in 1912.

Priestley highlights the change in gender roles by having younger women rebel against the roles society has set for them: Eva questions her boss's decisions (instead of accepting them quietly), Eva refuses Eric's stolen money and shows that she doesn't need a man to save her, and Sheila interrupts her family members and challenges them.

Priestley himself champions the women's movement as seen in how the play develops:

- He makes the male characters weaker as it goes on whereas Sheila gets stronger
- Sheila rejects Gerald
- Eric is a nervous and lazy man with a drinking problem
- Mr Birling's authority is questioned
- Sheila develops her own opinions, even if they contrast her family's, proving that she has learnt to think for herself.

Women in Society

Traditionally, women were seen as a source of human life as they were seen to lack intellect and were a source of temptation and evil for men as according to Greek mythology. In the twentieth century, there is a turn in this thinking however as women's suffrage begins and women begin fighting for power and politics, for their rights to be taken from their husbands and fathers and given to them directly. Suffrage also underpinned all ideas surrounding women's rights to work and their right to vote – essentially, they just wanted to become involved in the society in which they lived in.

However men were not willing to give up their control over women as they weren't seen as logical beings and so they didn't want them to get involved in politics. Alternatively, some people just didn't want to break tradition. Another traditional idea of women in this time was that they were more moral than men. Women were seen to be more religious as they were the majority of church congregations and so were given the role of upholding the morals in the family.

Women in the Family

When the play opens with the Birling family celebrating an engagement, the audience witness a display of Edwardian etiquette rules as the men were seen discussing serious and complex matters such as business, and the women congregate together away from the men. This signifies the idea that upper class women are too sensitive to hear about these issues, which we see again when the inspector arrives, and Mr Birling wants Sheila to leave.

This patronising practice stems from the idea that women are incapable of making important decisions (hence why they didn't have the vote). Sheila later contrasts this view by comprehending and appreciating what they as a family had done to Eva, and this is also seen when she is first to recognise that Eric is the father of Eva's unborn baby. In short, Sheila represents a lot of women, by being far more than what her father gave her credit for.

Women in the Work Place

Eva, as a working-class woman, is at the hands of her employers. She goes beyond the expectations of a woman in the Edwardian society by asking for more pay (which was a masculine demand) and so, is sacked. When she works at Milwards she is perfectly capable of her job but is fired as the result of a customer's comment. When finances are really slim for Eva she becomes a prostitute as a last result and then is exploited by the men who employ her which Eric confesses later to.

Answer the following questions

1. How do you think the characters will react when the new inspector arrives? Explain why with close reference to the text.

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2. Do you think the Birling family deserve to be ridiculed for their actions? Explain your opinion.

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3. Provide three examples of when Sheila and Eva challenge gender roles.

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4. Explain how the men's language change after the women leave in Act Three.

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5. How does Mr Birling's 'dominant male' position change by the end of the play?

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6. How does Sheila, Eva and Mrs Birling adhere to the conventions of femininity?

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7. Discuss what Mrs Birling does to present femininity which allows her greater privileges than Eva.

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Lesson 10

Socialism and Responsibility

Socialism

A range of economic and social systems characterized by social ownership and workers self-management of the means of production as well as political theories and movements associated to it.

Eva Smith opposes the Birling family in her political views as we can tell from her campaigning that she disagrees with the capitalist system, as it keeps her in a disadvantaged position, not allowing her to progress up the social ladder.

J.B Priestley himself was a socialist and we can see his opinions coming through in the voice of Inspector Goole as he expresses the key belief in 'An Inspector Calls': "We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other," by saying this, the Inspector wants the Birling family to realise the unjust reality the capitalist society produces and how – because of the corrupt system- it is all too easy for the poor to be taken advantage of, as the life of Eva demonstrates.

Capitalism

Capitalism – An economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.

The encounter between Eva and Mr Birling symbolises the battles between capital and labour. Mr Birling is an open capitalist as he refers to himself as "a hard-headed, practical man of business" and believes that "a man has to make his own way – has to look after himself." This would've made Mr Birling one of a group of people opposed by the upcoming socialists.

Collective Responsibility

"And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, when they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish."

Task

Try to answer all of the following questions in 15 minutes and include quotes where appropriate to support your thinking.

1. Who said the quote above?

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2. How did the speaker feel when saying this? How do you know this?

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3. How do the other characters feel about it? What is the effect on the audience?

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Collective Responsibility task:

We learn from the play that all of the characters (except for Inspector Goole) have had some effect on Eva's decision to take her own life.

Using examples from the play, state each character's contributing action which led to Eva's death, and their motive behind it.

Character	Motive	Action
Gerald Croft		
Eric Birling		
Mr Birling		
Mrs Birling		

Sheila Birling		
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Getting to know Eva Smith

The Hoax (Act Three)

After the Inspector had questioned the Birling family, each member now knows that they played a part in Eva’s suicide (whether they take responsibility for it or not). The Inspector warns them of “fire and blood and anguish” and then leaves. Soon after, the telephone rings and Mr Birling tells his family after hanging up that it was the police and that an Inspector was on his way to question them about the suicide of a young girl...

Answer the following questions:

1. How can the younger generation be seen in the responsibility taken for Eva’s death?

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2. To what extent are Eric and Sheila voices for Priestley’s purpose?

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3. Why do Arthur and Sybil try to cover up their involvement in Eva's death? What does imply about social class?

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4. Discuss the effect of the stage directions seen in the end of Act Three.

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5. Consider how the telephone is used to create tension.

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Stage Directions

1. Where does the Inspector keep the photograph of Eva?

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2. Where does the Inspector take each character to show them the photo of Eva?

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3. Why is the photo a controversial issue at the end of the play?

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Justice

In 'An Inspector Calls', justice is a huge theme, mainly approached by the Inspector. In view of that, try to answer these questions and stretch yourself by providing an even trickier question and answering that one too.

The Inspector's Inquiry:

1. What item does the Inspector show to each character when he questions them?

Why do you think this may be?

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2. Who chose the order in which Inspector Goole questioned each family member?

What effect did it have?

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3. How does the Inspector react to having his approach to questioning challenged?

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Further Your Understanding

True Justice

1. What injustices did Eva face in her life?

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2. Which individuals and groups failed to help Eva?

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3. When the play finishes, what chances does the audience think Eva has at receiving justice? Where does she receive this justice from?

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Understanding Quotes

Consider the following quotes and highlight/underline the important words – the key message from the quote. Then use those words in a sentence of your own.

"But these girls aren't cheap labour. They're people."

Your sentence:

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"I tell you, by that time you'll be living in a world that'll have forgotten all these Capital versus Labour agitations and all these silly little war scares. There'll be peace and prosperity and rapid progress everywhere."

Your sentence:

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"She was claiming elaborate fine feelings and scruples that were simply absurd in a girl in her position."

Your sentence:

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Mr Birling: "It's a free country, I told them. Eric: It isn't if you can't go work somewhere else."

Your sentence:

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"It happened that a friend of mine, Charlie Brunswick, had gone off to Canada for six months and had let have the key of a nice little set of rooms he had – in Morgan Terrace - and had asked me to keep an eye on them for him and use them if I wanted to. So I insisted on Daisy moving into those rooms and I made her take some money to keep her going there."

Your sentence:

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L11 worksheet: Context

Edwardian Era

Rules of Society

An Inspector Calls is set in 1912 (this falls into the Edwardian Period). At this time, Britain was quite different from how it is now:

- The class system was a prominent and important way to separate people. Those with more money had more power. Due to the unfair situation, this placed the lower classes in, the Labour Party was formed in 1906 with the intentions of giving them a bigger voice and a fairer life.
- Women had no power. They were unable to own property and unable to vote. A woman spent her life under the control of men on which they wholeheartedly depended on – this would be their father in their early life and then their husband when they were married and their son(s)/brother(s) if they were widowed.
- Governmental help was very limited. With rich people voting the government into power, there wasn't a government who cared enough about helping the lower classes to provide a voice, protection, or financial help. This meant that charities (such as the one that Sybil helped at) were so important to the lower classes.
- The play was first performed in 1945 but set in 1912. It's important to know what happened in between these years and why Priestley may have chosen to set the play in a different era.

Key Facts

- The Edwardian Era spans from the mid 1890's to the breakout of World War One in 1914. It is named after the reign of King Edward VII (Seventh) which spanned from 1901 to 1910.
- In the early 1900's there were significant political shifts regarding labourers and women who were becoming more and more involved in politics where they were previously excluded from it.
- Although there was still a strict social class structure, there was an increase in social mobility due to the changing economic system – this meant that people could change their social class easier rather than remaining in the same one that they were born into.
- As the disadvantaged people became more involved in politics, socialism became more popular as it focuses on helping the disadvantaged members of society.
- More economic opportunities were becoming available as the industry increased.

Edwardian Rules of Society

- Poor people don't possess any manners/class/sophistication/education.
- Poor people can never EVER become rich.
- The poor and rich can never join together in a relationship/friendship/work.
- Poor people should be grateful for all that they get from the rich.
- The poor are only there to do a job – not to be seen or heard.
- The poor worked for the rich.
- The rich can fire the poor without any questions or consequences.

Answer the following questions

1. Identify two incorrect predictions from Mr Birling and explain why they are wrong and how this changes the audience's opinion of him.

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2. Mr Birling tells Gerald and Sheila that they'll be marrying at "a very good time" –
Would the 1946 audience agree? Do you? Why/why not?

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3. Consider why Birling is wrong in his speech in Act one ("Just because the Kaiser..."
to "in the Balkans.")

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4. How were the British separated in Edwardian times and what was the social effects
of this?

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L12 Worksheet: Priestley, the man and the message

Priestley had quite strong political views that he wanted to express in the play. It was for this reason that Priestley set 'An Inspector Calls' in 1912 – a time that was quite different from the post-war society, for example, the gender barriers that were not to be crossed in 1912 were not adhered to or even considered in 1946. These changes came about from the post-war atmosphere which Priestley encourages his audience to continue to seize. Priestley's main goal was for the audience to take advantage of this time of change and join the political movement towards socialism.

Priestley's Message

1. What was Priestley's motive for writing Am Inspector Calls?

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2. What inspired Priestley's play?

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3. In what way does Priestley use the inspector as his mouthpiece?

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EXAM STYLE QUESTION & EXAMPLE PARAGRAPHS

How does Priestley explore the theme of guilt in An Inspector Calls?

Grade 5 Paragraph:

Priestley's character Sheila presents her reaction to her guilt through her change in language and attitude. To begin with Sheila doesn't think for herself and she uses childish language such as "I'm sorry, Daddy". The pronoun "Daddy" emphasises Sheila's childlike attitude. However, as the play progresses Sheila's language and attitude changes and becomes more confident and blunt. This can be seen when she states that they "drove that girl to commit suicide" and when she begins to disagree with her parents, telling them they're wrong and that they began to "learn something". Priestley uses Sheila's assertiveness to present her reaction to the guilt she feels towards impacting Eva's life.

Similarly to Sheila, Eric also reacts to his guilt. He understands that "the fact remains that I did what I did". The noun "fact" enforces the truth of what he did, accepting his mistake due to the fact that he feels guilty. He also criticises his parents saying that they "may be letting [themselves] out nicely". The metaphor informs the reader that Eric feels guilty about what he did and that his parents should too.

Priestley contrasts the younger generation reaction to guilt to the older generation's. Where the younger generation reflect on their mistakes and learn from them, showing their immense amount of guilt, the older generation are willing to pretend it never happened and label it a "hoax".

Grade 7/8 Paragraph:

Before the inspector's arrival in *An Inspector Calls*, Priestley's characters were presented as self-involved ; Sheila Birling in Act 1 before the Inspector arrives is described as a girl who was "very pleased with life". The adjective "pleased" reminds the audience that Sheila had a decent life with little to no hardships. This life for Sheila would have been standard during 1912 when the class divide made a huge impact and those who were above had an easy life.

Sheila's ease in life is reflected through her immaturity often referring to her parents as "Mummy" and "Daddy" which is typical of a child. However, Sheila matures throughout the play and her guilt is reflected through her change in language. In Act 2, Sheila changes the noun "Mummy" to "Mother" which sounds mature to the audience, reflecting her growth due to the guilt that she experiences. Sheila is also the first to accept her mistake stating that she knows she's to "blame" and "desperately sorry".

Priestley's use of the adverb "desperately" emphasises Sheila's guilt. This would go against Sheila's parents' wishes as they did not feel any remorse for their actions and would have rather resumed their normal lives.

Similarly to Sheila, Eric Birling expresses remorse for his actions and realises his responsibilities. To begin with, Eric is portrayed as "half shy, half assertive" with the implication that he is somewhat drunk. Eric's uneasy character reflects the audience's uneasiness as they cannot understand Eric's character to begin with. Like Sheila, Eric is seen as slightly immature and naïve, however he too understands his mistake exclaiming that "the fact reminds that I did what I did". Eric's acceptance and change in attitude reflects his understanding of his mistake and reinforces his guilt.

Priestley uses the younger characters contrasts of attitudes from the beginning of the play to the end to portray their guilt. As the older generation would have been stuck in their ideals and would not be able to accept their wrongdoings, Priestley uses the younger generation to portray guilt. Although the play is set in 1912, it was written and performed in 1945. The guilt of the characters would have inspired the audience as after the war the class system began to change since all men of all classes had to fight together in the war. Therefore, the younger characters change in attitude and expression of guilt would have mirrored the attitudes of some who came back from the war.